DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 202 817 SP 017 956

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TITLE Description and Long-Term Effectiveness of an Individualized Teacher Education Program.
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 32p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Independent Study; Individual Needs; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Participant Satisfaction; Postsecondary Education; *Program Effectiveness; *Summer Programs; Summer Schools; *Teacher Education Programs; Teaching Skills

ABSTRACT

Summer School in Action was created in 1979 by members of the Syracuse (New York) Area Teacher Center Policy Board to meet the expressed needs of local teachers. The participants for the first year (1979) were 21 elementary and secondary school teachers with a median of 8.6 years of teaching experience. The second year (1980) participants numbered 49, consisting of elementary, secondary, and special education teachers. Summer School in Action met for five weeks, for five days a week. The dual format program provided teachers with opportunities for self help through individual contracts and, at the same time, gave additional learning experience to school age children, many with learning problems. The teacher training was divided into six components: large group activities, home group activities, round table discussions, workshops, independent study, and classroom observation and practice. Through questionnaires, the program was found to be effective in improving content knowledge in 1979, and in increasing instructional skills in 1980, reflecting a shift in needs by the participants. The long-term attitudes of participants were determined to be favorable because of the use of skills or materials acquired in the program ten months later. (FG)

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DESCRIPTION AND LONG-TERM EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Do teachers find teacher education programs a successful experience? Do they implement newly learned skills in their own classrooms? After training has ended, do they continue to feel positively about the training experience and do they continue to use newly acquired skills for an extended time? Much has been written which indicates that teachers may respond positively during the last meeting to evaluation questions about a training program. However, when follow-up evaluations are conducted several weeks later, the responses tend to be negative - - even critical.

The purpose of this report is to provide descriptive data about an individualized teacher education program which has received very positive evaluations, even after a 10-month lapse. Descriptive data will be related to four categories of program variables: presage, content, process and product (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974). Specifically, descriptive narration and data will provide the following:

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- characteristics and contributions of program developers, leaders, teacher professors, and consultants
- characteristics of the program participants, setting and instructional content
- descriptions of the program design which includes an overview of actual instructional activities and program management
- participants' short/long term attitudes about the training program and classroom implementation of newly acquired skill

OVERVIEW

Members of the Syracuse Area Teacher Center Policy Board desired to create an inservice teacher training program that would meet the expressed needs of local teachers. After hours of meetings where ideas were discussed, argued, analyzed and synthesized, a program was created and named Summer School in Action.

Summer School in Action was based on the principles of using the self as an instrument, as described by the perceptual psychologists. Building on a concern for persons and their expectations while at the same time presenting specific competencies, methods, content and/or innovations, the program was designed to help teachers (including professors) discover methods and materials best suited to themselves in relation to their students and teaching positions. In order to facilitate personal growth, the planning committee determined that it was vitally important to create a safe and encouraging atmosphere in which a variety of options for the development of individual and group experiences were available.

The program evolved into two areas: the first, a teacher training program; the second, an enrichment program for children in grades K-12. The two strands interacted in a variety of ways

but the primary purpose was to allow teacher participants an opportunity to observe various teaching styles, to test their own newly-acquired skills and/or materials and to evaluate their own teaching.

The first Summer School in Action occurred during the summer of 1979 with 21 teacher participants. They arrived rather unsure about what was expected of them by this experimental program. Enthusiasm grew over the weeks; self-direction and confidence abounded. But the nagging question that grew for the teacher educators was, "Will the effects be lasting?"

Final evaluation instruments were administered anonymously during the last week. In addition, teacher participants were interviewed in groups of two to five individuals by an outside interviewer. Youngsters and their parents evaluated the program using similar instruments. During September and October of 1979, the videotape* machine was taken into the classrooms of five randomly selected teacher participants to verify classroom use of skills/materials. A follow-up evaluation was conducted during May and June, 1980, to gather attitudes about the program and to determine continued use of skills learned during the previous summer program.

The second Summer School in Action was conducted during the summer of 1980 with 49 teacher participants. The enrollment had grown, not due to our advertising campaign (which we have been told does not fully describe the diversity of the program) but rather to word of mouth from previous participants. In fact, 9 of the 21 original participants returned.

* A 22 minute video-tape of "Summer School in Action contains excerpts of interviews and classroom visits.

CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF PROGRAM DEVELOPERS, LEADERS, TEACHER PROFESSORS, AND CONSULTANTS

Program Developers

The seven program developers for the first year (1979) represented university faculty, teacher center staff, school district administration, and classroom teachers from two school districts. They ranged in age from 29-54, and in teaching experience from 5 - 36 years.

- Developer 1 was an assistant professor in the Division for the Study of Teaching at Syracuse University, and also a coordinator for the West Genesee/Syracuse University Teaching Center. Noted for her interest in inservice program development and individualizing instruction, she was the person who originated the idea of a Summer School in Action, and who led in the development of creating an inservice program that was based on individual teacher's needs.
- Developer 2 was a university professor and the Chair for the Division for the Study of Teaching. Highly respected for his work in teacher education and program development, he caused the group to continually look at new options and to explore a wide variety of ideas and methods for program implementation.
- Developer 3 was an assistant superintendent from one of the school districts. Interested in quality educational programs, he worked to assure that a high level enrichment program would be provided for the children, and was also responsible for providing a site for the program.

- Developer 4 was the Associate Director for the Syracuse Area Teacher Center, and an adjunct lecturer for the Division for the Study of Teaching. Her background in Special Education led to the inclusion of handicapped children in the program in order that mainstreaming techniques could be implemented.
- Developer 5 was a suburban kindergarten teacher. Her many years of unusually creative teaching experience were helpful in the development of an enrichment program for the children.
- Developer 6 was a city teacher on special assignment to the district offices. His knowledge of district level resources provided many solutions to concerns about busing and location of materials.
- Developer 7 was an inner city classroom teacher. Her commitment to minority children led to the decision to open the program to children from both the suburbs and inner city.

For the second year of the program, the same committee of program developers was kept intact, with the exception of Developer 7, who moved to another state. However, her ideas concerning the inclusion of minority children in the program were maintained.

The entire committee of program developers, in both 1979 and 1980, worked together as a group to develop advertising, to select children for the program, to hire master teachers, and to solve other logistical problems.

Program Leaders

Once the Summer School in Action program was developed, it became the responsibility of three program leaders (all of whom had also been program developers) to see that this program was effectively implemented.

- Leader 1 (previously listed as Developer 1) was responsible for the overall program for the teacher participants. She assessed teacher needs and arranged for workshops to be presented to meet those needs, arranged meetings with teacher professors to review the program as it progressed, coordinated requests for materials and resources from the teacher participants, and worked to solve any teacher participant problems that arose.
- Leader 2 (previously listed as Developer 6) served as the teaching principal for the program for the children. His role included overseeing the program for the children, arranging for student transportation, and communicating with parents.
- Leader 3 (previously listed as Developer 4) was responsible for integrating the two components of the program in such a way that teacher participants would have the opportunity to try new skills and/or materials with students without disrupting, but rather adding to, the enrichment program for the children. In addition, she also worked with Master Teachers on mainstreaming the handicapped children in their classes.

The same three individuals served as program leaders for both 1979 and 1980.

Teacher Professors

The teacher professors in both 1979 and 1980 were responsible for working with the teacher participants to develop individual contracts of study and to provide help, suggestions, and resources in order that participants could fulfill contract requirements.

1979

- Teacher Professor 1 (previously listed as Developer 1) used her background and training in English and individualizing instruction to work with teacher participants in the areas of reading, language arts, and learning centers.
- Teacher Professor 2 (previously listed as Developer 4) teamed with Teacher Professor 1 to work in the areas of primary language arts and special education.
- Teacher Professor 3 was an associate professor in the Division for the Study of Teaching. His background in the field of math education and individualizing instruction led to his work with teacher participants in the development and implementation of contracts in the areas of math and computer usage.
- Teacher Professor 4 was an assistant professor in the Division for the Study of Teaching. His background in humanistic education led to his work with teacher participants in the areas of discipline, classroom management, social studies, and values clarification.

In 1980, Teacher Professors 1-3 returned to the program, assuming their same responsibilities from the previous year. Professor 4 had moved from the area, and was replaced. A decision by the program developers to expand the program led to the inclusion of two additional professors. The teacher professors new to the program in 1980 were:

- Teacher Professor 4 was an assistant professor in the Division for the Study of Teaching, and the coordinator of the Jamesville-DeWitt Teaching Center. His background in Teacher Education and his experience in teaching at the secondary level resulted in his work with

teacher participant contracts in the areas of secondary English, social studies, and writing skills.

- Teacher Professor 5 was an associate professor in the Division for the Study of Teaching. His work with teacher participants relating to science and photography was a reflection of his strong background in science education.
- Teacher Professor 6 was an assistent professor in the Division for the Study of Teaching and coordinator of the Syracuse City Teaching Center. Her background in the Peace Corps and social studies led to her work with contracts in the area of elementary social studies.

In both 1979 and 1980, in addition to their responsibilities with individual participants, all Teacher Professors conducted workshops and discussions throughout the five week program.

Consultants

In both 1979 and 1980, a variety of consultants, noted for their expertise in specialized areas, were brought in to work with individual teachers and to conduct a variety of small group workshops. These consultants consisted of classroom teachers, professional trainers, graduate students, and university professors.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS, SETTING AND INSTRUCTIONAL CONTEXT

Participants

Of the 21 teachers who participated in 1979, 10 were from inner-city schools and 11 were from 4 suburban school districts serving a predominately white population ranging from upper to lower-middle class. Seven of the teachers taught in secondary schools in the content areas of special education (2), social studies (1), English (3) and home economics (1). The remaining 13 were elementary teachers who represented grades K-6. The teachers ranged in experience from two to 31 years with a median of 8.62 years.

As mentioned earlier, these teachers felt uneasy about this new program and what was expected of them. Three had enrolled because they wanted credit toward a pay increment, 5 had been convinced by a teacher center coordinator that this would be a great experience, 6 had come because of previous contact with teacher professors and 7 needed credit toward permanent certification. A secondary teacher with 31 years met these writers with the comment, "I've taught more years than anyone else here. I've taken lots of graduate courses. I don't think there's anything you can teach me that I haven't already tried."

Only two of these teachers had experienced an individualized approach to learning. The discussion about designing individual contracts indicated that a great concern existed about the program's structure and assignment of grades. Although the greater number moved into the independent learner mold by the middle of the second week, 3 teachers required constant structure throughout the five-week program.

The teachers attending the 1980 session totaled 49; 32 from city schools, 16 from 5 suburban districts and 1 from a Canadian school district. The 12 secondary teachers represented the content areas of English (5), social studies (4), French (1), and math (2). Twenty-nine teachers were elementary education majors and 8 were trained in special education. The range of experience was from 1 to 32 years with a median of 10.4 years.

Among this group were 9 teachers (43%) who had attended during the previous summer. Included in this nine was the teacher who had greeted us with, "I don't think there is anything you can teach me..."! She had become one of our most vocal recruiters. Each of these 9 teachers came prepared to write their contracts on the first day. In fact, 5 of them had study materials with them.

Of the remaining group of 40, only five were unfamiliar with the program's structure. As a result, all participants had written, signed and begun to work on their contracts by Thursday of the first week. None of the participants required daily structuring as during the previous summer.

Setting

The program was held in an elementary school located in a predominately white, middle to lower-middle class school district. The building, designed to house approximately 1000 children and 60+ staff members, provided program participants with a sense of delight in the available space, the well-stocked library, the immaculate interior and the spacious grounds. Additionally, hospitality was extended by the regular building administrator who met with the program leaders to determine needs such as appropriate furniture, space and audio-visual equipment. The wing of the building assigned to us contained a gymnasium, teachers' room with stove and refrigerator, photography dark room, art room, library,

A-V room, cafeteria, offices, teacher center workroom and 22 classrooms.

Instructional Context

"Summer School in Action" met three hours, five days a week for five weeks. A variable credit system allowed teachers the option of registering for one to six hours of graduate credit.

Various role groups were identified as follows:

- Teacher participants - certified teachers desiring to increase their teaching skills on an individually defined basis
- Teacher professors - university personnel who assisted individual teacher participants in establishing a contractual learning agreement, provided instruction, served as resources and facilitators for learning and provided structure/support when needed.
- Master teachers - certified teachers whose role was to develop the enrichment activities for the children and to work cooperatively with teacher participants desiring to observe and/or test their own teaching.
- Auxiliary teacher - a certified teacher whose role was to provide children with movement education while allowing master teachers free time to work with teacher participants.
- Teaching principal - this individual coordinated activities of children's program, caused parent involvement and facilitated flexible teaming among teachers.

The Summer School in Action" program consisted of a dual format. The first focused on providing teachers with opportunities to

1) identify personal learning/teaching styles

2) voluntarily attend workshops
3) request specific materials and human resources
4) develop and test instructional materials and/or teaching strategies
5) receive non-judgemental feedback
6) observe teaching of peers and demonstrations by teacher professors
7) share materials, ideas, skills, problems, goals and solutions.

The development of individual contracts allowed for a wide variety of interests, needs, approaches to learning and use of time. Contracts provided structure and objectives while placing the responsibility of the process of growth with the teacher. Although each contract was individual, it was possible to group individuals by similar interests.

The second format was designed to enrich the learning experience of school age children. Very briefly the school age population for the first summer included 72 students and the second, 118 students. The school age population was sub-divided into multi-age groups (2-3 year age span) with approximately 18 members per class. Composed of inner-city, suburban and rural youngsters, this group included children who were bi-lingual, blind, gifted, learning disabled, slow learners, average, physically handicapped and mentally retarded. Special care was taken in selecting 2 youngsters with special needs for each classroom. A lottery system was used to select equal numbers of city and suburban youngsters.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM DESIGN

Designed to offer a wide range of educational experiences for the teacher participants, the program was divided into six components: Large Group Activities, Home Group Activities, Round Table Discussions, Workshops, time for Independent Study, and Classroom Observation and Practice. The teacher participants determined their own schedule for each day, selecting the components offered to meet their individual needs. Attendance was required at only the Large Group and Home Group meetings.

Large Group Activities

In 1979, the entire group met for the first half hour, and frequently for the last fifteen minutes, of each day. This time was occasionally used for such organizational activities as an overview of the program and an explanation of contract writing and grading. The major portion of this time was spent in large group instruction, i.e. Peer Observation; Research on Inservice Education; Teacher Effectiveness; An Administrator's Views Toward Inservice; and Humanizing Education. In 1980, a far smaller portion of program time was devoted to Large Group Activities, and this time was primarily used for organizational activities and instruction in Peer Observation.

Home Group

The teacher participants were requested to select an area of study which they would pursue throughout the program. Based on the area selected, the participants were then divided into small groups and assigned to a teacher professor. In 1979, there were three home groups: one concentrating in math and science; one in language arts and learning centers, and

one in discipline, social studies, values clarification, and humanizing education. In 1980, there were five home groups: science; one on anguage arts, special education, and learning centers; one on social studies; and one specifically for secondary teachers. The focus of each Home Group was determined by the expressed interest of teachers. For example, the learning center Home Group discussed how to set objectives, assess needs, select appropriate activities, use the Center to individualize, establish a record system, and method of evaluation. The frequency and length of Home Group meetings was determined by the group members in conjunction with the teacher professor.

Round Tables

Topics for these weekly discussions were suggested by the teacher participants. Led by either a teacher professor or teacher participant, these one hour sharing sessions centered around positive ideas for solving common problems, i.e. Maintaining Discipline in the Classroom, Communicating Effectively with Parents, Working with Administration, Dealing with Difficult Students, and Ways of Motivating Students.

Workshops

At the beginning of the program, participants were asked to indicate their interest in a variety of workshop topics. Based on this interest survey, these workshops, which ranged in length from a single 1/2 hour session to training sessions of 3 hours per day for five days, were scheduled throughout the program. Teacher participants attended those workshops which most met their individual needs and interests. In 1979, the following workshops were conducted by program leaders and outside consultants: Distar Reading Program, Team Teaching Techniques, Mainstreaming, Using the Video Camera in Teaching, Working with Physically Handicapped Children, Using Contracts in the Classroom,

Discipline Techniques that Work, Weehawken Writing Program, Wynroth Math Program, Act of Listening, Working with Hyperactive Children, Movement Education, Chisanbop, Dealing with Teacher Stress, Direct Instruction, Developmental Math Program, Developmental Reading Program, Positive Reinforcement, and Reading in the Content Area. In 1980, workshop topics included: Thinking Skills, Using Contracts in the Classroom, Discipline Techniques that Work, Toys in Science, Metrics in the Classroom, Mainstreaming, Using the Video Camera in the Classroom, Weehawken Writing Program, Wynroth Math Materials, Workjobs, Reading in the Content Area, Consumer Goods, Programs for Gifted and Talented, Dealing with Teacher Stress, and Preparing Students for the Regents Competency Exam.

Independent Study

Participants spent much of the program time engaged in independent work to fulfill contract requirements. This time was used in a wide variety of ways. Consultants were often brought in to work with individual participants, i.e. a consultant met with a teacher to develop skills in computer programming; another consultant worked with a participant to develop a proposal for funding special science activities; and another consultant gave advice to a participant who wished to develop activities for gifted students. Teacher professors were available at this time to consult with participants in such areas as testing of special education students, developing a specific curriculum unit in Renaissance literature, and devising a record keeping system for multi-level math activities. Small groups of participants frequently worked together to make materials for reading and math learning centers, or to develop specific activities for the teaching of writing at the secondary level. Participants also used this time to visit other programs, such as a B.O.C.E.S. trainable level class and a computer program in another school district. In all cases, the amount and

use of independent study time was determined by each individual participant.

Classroom Observation and Practice

The four classes of children in 1979, and the six classes in 1980 were available at all times to the teacher participants, and were used in varying ways. Participants often spent time in the classrooms observing the master teachers and gathering new ideas for their own classrooms. As teacher participants developed new materials and/or techniques, they would try these out with the children, either by taking individual or small groups of children out of their classroom, or by working in the classroom with the entire group. All participants were trained during Large Group sessions in the use of peer observation, and were encouraged to use this system when working with the children. Peer observation caused teachers to examine their teaching as most had never done. Using the clinical supervision model, teachers met with each other to discuss what would be observed, objectives of the lesson, and materials to be used. After the observation, discussions centered on the analysis of recorded data. This process led to adjustments in both materials and strategies that were then tested again.

As was stated previously, the teacher participants determined their own schedule, incorporating various components of the program into each day. Following is a sample of how three different participants used the same day:

	Participant I	Participant II	Participant III
9:00 - 9:30	Large Group - Peer observation skills	Large Group - Peer observation skills	Large Group - Peer observation skills
9:30 - 10:00	Workshop - - Using Contracts in the Classroom	Independent Study- Make materials for Math Learning Center	Independent Study Meet with consultant on computer programming
10:00 - 10:30	Independent Study - meet with teacher professor on Special Education testing	Workshop - Wynroth Math Materials	Independent Study - Work on developing computer program for Reading Skills
10:30 - 11:00	Home Group - discussion on individualizing learning	↓	Try program with two 6th grade students
11:00 - 11:30	Independent Study - Review 6 different tests that could be used with Special Educ.	Independent Study - Make Math Learning Center Materials	Round Table - Discussion on Motivating Students
11:30 - 12:00	↓	Home Group - discussion on assessing levels of functioning in math	↓

SHORT/LONG TERM ATTITUDES ABOUT TRAINING PROGRAM AND IMPLEMENTATION

Short-Term Attitudes

A questionnaire, containing both structured and unstructured questions, was used to gather information during the final week of the training program. Although we recognize the limitations of the unstructured question, we specifically wanted to determine what teachers identified as strengths and weaknesses of the training program and what teachers had to say about the use of newly acquired materials/skills in the classroom.

The content of the responses elicited by each unstructured question was analyzed and categorized (e.g. learning from other teachers, improve instructional skills, etc.). Proportions were arrived at by comparing the number of responses for each category to the total number of responses for each question.

Participants were asked, "Compared to other graduate courses, how would you describe Summer School in Action to a friend?" Analysis of the data provided five categories as seen in Table 1. In 1979, items which fit the categories of Chance to test new skills, materials, ideas (.28) and Learning from other teachers (.27) were most frequently mentioned. In 1980, participants most frequently provided words of praise which were tallied in the Excellent, beneficial (words of praise) category (.27).

Table 1

Frequency and Proportion of Categorized Responses for 1979, 80 Summer School in Action Programs

	1979 (N= 21)		1980 (N= 49)	
Responses*	# of Responses	Proportion	# of Responses	Proportion
Learning from other teachers	16	.27	26	.20
Create own course for individual growth	12	.21	23	.18
Excellent, beneficial, etc.	11	.19	35	.27
Chance to test new skills, materials, ideas	16	.28	26	.20
Structure combined with independence	3	.05	19	.15
** Total	58	1.00	129	1.00

* Responses reflect comparisons to other graduate courses.

** Mean number of responses for 1979 group was 2.76; for 1980, 2.63.

When asked to list things that each had learned "as a result of your involvement with Summer School in Action program; participants listed responses which provided the 5 categories seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency and Proportion of Categorized Responses About Things Learned During the 1979,80 Summer School in Action Programs

	1979 (N=21)		1980 (N=49)	
Responses*	# of Responses	Proportion	# of Responses	Proportion
Content	41	.62	43	.29
Self	12	.18	29	.19
New materials available	7	.11	4	.03
Instructional skills	6	.09	72	.49
** Total	66	1.00	148	1.00

* Responses reflect things learned during program.

** Mean number of responses for 1979 group was 3.14; for 1980, 3.5

As indicated in Table 2, a shift occurred in the responses given about the learning of content and the improvement of instructional skills between 1979 and 1980. In reviewing the responses, the 1979 participants clearly listed items indicating increased knowledge ABOUT various content (i.e. metrics, consumer education) while the 1980 participants provided responses about

learning HOW to improve instructional behaviors (i.e. how to teach writing, work with small groups, reduce discipline problems, etc.). Did the program shift focus? Did the participants have different needs? Indeed, the answer to both questions is YES. The assessed needs of the 1980 participants had indicated a desire to improve teaching skills which caused the program planners to provide intense workshops to meet those needs.

The category of Self was the result of comments such as: "I learned not to be threatened by children classified as gifted", "I learned that I could be an independent learner", and "I learned that learning can be fun."

When asked to rank resources according to their helpfulness, the 1980 participants responded differently than had those in 1979, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3

Ranking by 1979,80 Participants in Summer School in Action Programs of Helpfulness of Resources

1979	Resources	1980
1	Other Teachers	2
2	Teacher Professors	1
3	Outside Consultants	5
4	Written resources	3
5	Children	6
6	Master Teachers	4

A number of speculations come to mind as one notes that every ranking changed between 1979 and 1980. Of importance, is the value placed upon the learning gained from Other Teachers and Teacher Professors regardless of which is ranked as #1. The increased influence of the Master Teachers is in keeping with the 1980 emphasis on HOW to teach. Also, meetings between Master Teachers and participants was better facilitated during the summer of 1980. The lower ranking of the Children caused program planners some concern,so we specifically questioned participants about this issue. Verbal responses indicated that being able to test new skills with the children is highly valued (see Table 4) but that the children were less valued as resources than were other resources on the list.

The next question asked participants to "Please list aspects that you particularly enjoyed about the Summer School in Action program." The eight categories identified from these responses are shown in Table 4.

The category Being able to try new things with kids includes teacher comments, such as: "Being able to try something that I've always been afraid to try with kids during regular school year," and "Being able to test writing materials I developed with kids." Unfortunately, the process of categorizing the teacher's comments results in a sterilization process which prevents the reader from experiencing the openness with which the comments were written.

The similarity of comments between the 1979 and 1980 teacher participants contributed to the same categories in 6 instances as shown in Table 4.

The next 2 questions asked for similar information. The first asked for a list of DISLIKES, Table 5; while the second asked for RECOMMENDED changes, Table 6.

Table 4

Frequency* and Proportion of Categorized Responses of Aspects Participants Particularly Enjoyed About the 1979,80 Summer School in Action Programs

	1979 (N=21)		1980 (N=49)	
Responses*	# of Responses	Proportion	# of Responses	Proportion
Format (location, time, etc.)	0	.00	22	.13
Sharing with other teachers	18	.26	24	.14
Written resources	4	.06	12	.07
Being able to try new things with kids	10	.15	48	.28
Independence	19	.27	24	.14
Teacher Professors	17	.24	22	.13
Workshops	0	.00	17	.10
Parent involvement	1	.02	2	.01
** Total	69	1.00	171	1.00

* Responses reflect enjoyed aspects of program.

** Mean number of responses for 1979 group was 3.3; for 1980, 2.63.

Table 5

Frequency and Proportion of Categorized Responses of Aspects Participants Did Not Like About the 1979,80 Summer School in Action Programs

	1979 (N = 21)		1980 (N = 49)	
Responses*	# of Responses	Proportion	# of Responses	Proportion
No response	7	.33	22	.54
Having to decide whether to work independently or attend workshop, or which workshop	5	.23	6	.15
Too short	2	.10	4	.10
Students starting at same date we did	3	.14	0	.00
Lack of precise guidelines	2	.10	2	.05
Limited resources	0	.00	1	.02
Too long	0	.00	1	.02
Other (i.e. no zerox machine, far drive, cost, etc.)	2	.10	5	.12
** Total	21	1.00	41	1.00

* Responses reflect things disliked about programs.

** Mean number of responses for 1979 group was 1.0; for 1980, .84.

Interestingly, the second category in Table 5 indicates that some of the participants did not like having to make choices. However, not one suggestion was made to actually CHANGE the number of choices available as can be noted in Table 6.

Category 4 on both Tables 5 and 6, which refers to starting date for youngsters, appears as a problem only in the 1979 column.

In establishing 1980 starting dates, the Program planners examined this concern and agreed with the 1979 participants. Therefore, the 1980 youngsters arrived one week later than the 1980 teacher participants. This allowed time for participants to establish their own goals, write contracts, become familiar with their own program, and learn techniques of peer observation without the additional pressure of trying to schedule themselves into classrooms for initial observations, Also, the Master teachers were available this first week to meet with participants to establish a working relationship.

Table 6

Frequency and Proportion of Categorized Responses of Recommended Changes for Summer School in Action Program

	1979 (N = 21)		1980 (N = 49)	
Responses*	# of Responses	Proportion	# of Responses	Proportion
No response	3	.10	32	.60
Schedule more large group & home group meetings	7	.23	12	.23
More contact with parents	0	.00	1	.02
More time before kids arrive	9	.30	0	.00
Have 1 home group at University	0	.00	1	.02
Teacher Professor should relate to everyone	0	.00	1	.02
More guidelines	5	.17	0	.00
More time with Master teachers	4	.13	0	.00
Other (zerox machine, more pot lucks, keep school open until 5 p.m.)	2	.07	6	.11
** Total	30	1.00	53	1.00

* Responses reflect recommended changes.

** Mean number of responses for 1979 was 1.43; for 1980, 1.08.

When asked, "Would you recommend Summer School in Action to your friends" and "Would you be interested in attending Summer School in Action again?", 100% of the participants for both years answered with YES to both questions.

Long-term Attitudes and Implementation

The Summer School in Action follow-up questionnaire was mailed to the 1979 participants during May, 1980 and to the 1980 participants at the end of January, 1981 (the earlier date was due to the deadline for this paper). Of the 21 1979 participants, follow-up information was received from 19 (90%). One of the two missing respondents had left teaching due to a terminal illness and the other had left New York state. Thirty-nine (80%) of the 49 1980 participants returned the questionnaire. Of the missing 10, we received 3 returned envelopes due to no forwarding address. Because of limited time, we were unable to learn about the other 7.

The follow-up questionnaire was similar to the evaluation instrument in that it contained mostly unstructured questions with a few Yes/No questions. As previously, the content of the responses elicited by the unstructured questions was analyzed and categorized.

"Have you used materials or skills with children that you developed during Summer School in Action? Yes ( ) No ( )" brought 19 Yes (100%) responses for 1979 participants and 38 Yes (97%), 1 No (3%) for 1980 participants. The 1 No response explained that she had been moved from a K-6 teaching position to a 7-9 teaching position.

If the response to this previous question was Yes, participants were asked to explain HOW materials/skills had been used and for how long (Table 7).

Table 7

Frequency and Percentages of Responses About How Long Teachers Used Materials/Skills Acquired During 1979,80 Summer School in Action Programs

How Long Used Skills/Materials	1979 (N = 19) # of Responses	%	1980 (N = 38) # of Responses	%
1 week	0	00	1	3
2 weeks	2	11	0	0
3 weeks	0	0	1	3
4 weeks	2	11	0	0
8 weeks	0	00	4	10
10 weeks	1	05	2	5
Full Semester	4	21	1	3
All Year	10	52	29	76
Total	19	100	38	100

As seen in Table 7, responses about length of use varied from 1 week to all year. Individuals who indicated usage of 10 weeks or less each referred to specific materials or units of study (i.e. unit on Renaissance writers),that were taught independently,when responding to the HOW part of this question. Those individuals who used new materials/skills for a full semester or longer explained that materials/skills were integrated into the existing curriculum (i.e. teaching reading/writing in the content areas, eliminating discipline problems, toys in science, etc.). Some of the full year responses indicated additional variance in use with qualifiers, such as once:a week, once a day or in every lesson. It would be interesting to explore this aspect but since only a few responded in this way, we were unable to pursue these responses in depth.

Teachers were asked to judge how successfully they had used the materials/skills in their own classrooms. The responses provided the 5 categories seen in Table 8.

Table 8
Frequencies and Percentages of Responses About How Successfully Teachers Used Skills/Materials Acquired During 1979,80 Summer School in Action Programs

	1979 (N = 19)		1980 (N = 38)	
How Successfully Used Material/Skill	# of Responses	%	# of Responses	%
Not sure	1	5	0	00
Somewhat	2	11	2	05
Quite, Good	3	16	9	24
Very	12	63	23	61
Excellent	1	5	4	10
Total	19	100	38	100

The individual who responded, "Not sure", went on to explain that she had been using the materials for just two weeks and had not had time yet to assess their value on her use of them.

"What changes might have improved your use in the classroom?" brought responses that led to the 7 categories in Table 9.

Table 9 indicates that the major change would be to provide a better fit of materials/skills to meet the needs of all children in the classroom. Comments included: "I should have taught proofreading in September to better prepare the students for the writing instruction," and "The materials were too difficult for some children." Teacher Professors and Program Planners, in preparing for Summer 1981, will need to determine methods of assisting teachers in working with students of varying learning abilities and in determining prerequisite skills to be taught.

Table 9

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses About What Teacher Would Change to Improve Classroom Use of Materials/Skills Acquired During 1979,80 Summer School in Action Programs

What Change to Improve Classroom Use	1979 (N = 19) # of Responses	%	1980 (N = 38) # of Responses	%
None	10	53	16	42
Adjust to meet needs of all children	4	21	9	24
Allow more time	1	5	5	13
Provide Better Management	2	11	4	11
I need more training	0	0	2	5
More equip/materials	1	5	2	5
More practice	1	5	0	0
Total	19	100	38	100

All participants (100%) answered YES when asked "Would you recommend Summer School in Action to your friends." When asked to explain Why, the seven categories seen in Table 10 were identified from the responses. (At this point, the 1980 participant who had changed grade levels provided responses.)

When considering the lapse of time between the responses, it is interesting to note the similarity of categories listed in Table 10 with those in Tables 1 and 4. However, the proportion of responses per category in Table 10 (1979 and 1980) is different than those in Tables 1 and 4 with less emphasis on sharing with other teachers. Responses placed in the Chance to test new skills, ideas and Practical, worthwhile categories each contained key words which signaled the appropriate category. Yet, a question surfaces concerning whether comments about the worthwhileness of the program are independent or actually interwined and thus a result of the other categories.

Table 10

Frequency and Proportion of Categorized Responses About Why Recommend Summer School in Action to a Friend

	1979 (N = 19)		1980 (N = 39)	
Responses*	# of Responses	Proportion	# of Responses	Proportion
Individualized	5	.14	6	.12
Share with other teachers	4	.11	1	.02
Chance to test new skills, ideas	7	.20	20	.40
Practical, worthwhile	8	.23	6	.12
Resources	2	.06	5	.10
Staff	2	.06	3	.06
Develop own materials	7	.20	9	.18
** Total	35	1.00	50	1.00

* Responses reflect how describe program to friend.

** Mean number of responses for 1979 group was 1.84, for 1980, 1.28.

The final follow-up question asked participants, "Would you be interested in attending Summer School in Action again. ( ) Yes ( ) No Please explain."

Sixteen (84%) of the 1979 group responded YES and 3 (16%) responded NO; with 38 (97%) YES and 1 (1%) No responses in 1980.

Explanations from the 1979 group ranged from "Yes, but the cost is prohibitive;" Yes, but I need to work on required courses for Masters;" to "No, I have a new baby." As mentioned earlier, 9 (47%) of these individuals did return in 1980.

Thirty-eight (97%) of the 1980 participants responded that they would like to return with 1 (3%) responding "Yes and No, because I'd like to but I have no more electives for my Master's program." The current responses contain actual content/skills that the participants would like to pursue. And would you believe--our veteran teacher, of now 33 years, plans to return for her third Summer School in Action. Actually, her response could easily be transformed into her learning contract for the summer of '81.

SUMMARY

Program planners began meeting in October 1980 to prepare for Summer School in Action, 1981. Our enthusiasm has continued although the tasks seem endless. We could easily be lulled by the apparent positive responses gathered by the evaluation and follow-up instruments. However, a number of concerns guide our preparations:

- We are not certain whether specific program factors contributed more than others; therefore, we strive to maintain the continued balance of all factors.
- We have no measure (other than self-report) of how successfully teachers have actually used the newly acquired materials/skills in their own classroom.
- No information has been collected concerning changes in children's behaviors, so we are asking ourselves if a more rigorous study should be conducted this coming year.
- Do the on-going school year activities of the teaching center contribute to the maintenance of positive attitudes?
- Through informal communications, we have learned that 4 teacher participants have presented workshops on new skills for others, that several teachers have involved peers in team teaching, 1 has involved an entire secondary social studies department in re-writing its curriculum, etc., etc. All of these events have grown out of participation at Summer School in Action. Are teachers creating their own support systems or should we assume more of the responsibility?

And so, the questions could continue. And rightfully! The bane of any well received program is to allow future plans to lapse into the molding of participants to fit the past events. Indeed, our role is to continue to facilitate the learning of future participants by continuing to ask, "What are your interests, your needs?" And we the Program Developers must continue to question the program's long-term effectiveness.